

Application No. 10/614,148

Reply to Office Action

REMARKS

Reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.

Status of the Application

Claims 8-15, 17, 20-29 and 32-35 are currently pending. Of these, claims 32-35 are new. Support for claims 32-35 may be found at, e.g., claims 9, 10, 12 and 13 as filed, and throughout the specification. No new matter has been introduced into the application by way of these amendments.

Summary of the final Office Action

The Office Action of January 24, 2006 was made final, and indicates that claims 8-15 and 22-29 are allowed, claims 16, 18, 19, 30 and 31 are rejected as being anticipated by U.S. Patent 5,994,496 ("VanHaare et al."), and claims 15, 17, 21 and 22 are objected to as being dependent on a rejected base claim.

As an initial matter, claim 15 was indicated as allowable (subject only to an obviousness-type double patenting rejection, since withdrawn) in the prior Office Action, but in the final Office Action is categorized both as "allowed" and "objected to." Applicants assume that claim 15 is allowed, and will not further comment on the objection thereto.

Applicants submit that this response overcomes all of the outstanding rejections and objections by cancelling claims 16, 18, 30 and 31 without prejudice, and rendering claims 17, 20 and 21 independent. Moreover, as new claims 32-35 are dependent on allowable independent claims, these new claims should also be found allowable.

Conclusion

As Applicants believe the application is in proper condition for allowance, the examiner is respectfully requested to pass the application to issue. If, in the opinion of the Examiner, a telephone conference would expedite the prosecution of the subject application, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned attorney.

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Respectfully submitted,



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